Amateur Radio Newsline™ Report 1380 – January 23, 2004

CLOSED CIRCUIT ADVISORY

This is Andy Jarema, N6TCQ, Newsline Support Fund Administrator. We haven't asked for quite some time, but we need contributions TODAY. If you value this service, please help.

We're here to serve you for as long as you want us. Your response over the next several weeks will provide that answer.

The address for the Amateur Radio Newsline is Post Office Box 660937, Arcadia California, 91066.

Looking forward to hearing from you REALLY soon, I'm Andy Jarema, N6TCQ.

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Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1380 with a release date of Friday, January 23, 2004 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The ARRL says that it will petition the FCC for a code free entry level license with high frequency phone privileges and Amateur Radio Neewsline announces the Roy Neal, K6DUE, Amateur Radio Mentoring Project. These stories and more coming your way on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1380 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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HAM RADIO POLITICS: A NEW DIRECTION

Topping the news this week -- honoring one of our own. Enlisting an army of volunteers to make us all a little bit better -- and doing it in the name of the late Roy Neal, K6DUE. But first -- the biggest organization of Amateur Radio operators in the world finally takes a position on the code versus no-code issue. The ARRL is asking the FCC in a petition for rulemaking to create a no code entry level H-F license for anyone who can successfully pass a written exam of a mere 25 questions. If the FCC accepts the ARRL idea, it would keep the more stringent requirements for the Amateur Extra Class license, including their ability to send and receive Morse code. Amateur Radio Newsline’s David Black, KB4KCH, takes a look at the details of what the ARRL is asking the FCC to do:

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Code free access to ham radio's high frequency bands ... it's part of what could change amateur radio's complexion forever. And it could become reality. The ARRL says it will ask the FCC to make sweeping changes to the United States amateur radio service. Perhaps the biggest change of all: Creating a new entry level ham radio license that grants access to high frequencies without requiring any Morse code proficiency.

But that's not all. The League also proposes consolidating all amateur radio licenses into three classes: Novice, as it's being called for now, General and

the highest level, Extra. And only the Extra class license would require Morse code proficiency--of 5 words per minute. The new Novice license would require a 25-question written test and would offer limited HF, Morse code, data and phone and image privileges on 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters. Novices would also have VHF and UHF privileges, including access to 6 meters and 2 meters. Their power levels would be restricted to 100 watts on 80, 40 and 15 meters, and to 50 watts on 10 meters and higher.

The middle amateur radio license would continue to be the General, but it would include all current Technician, Tech Plus and present General license holders. This license would not require a Morse code test. Under this proposal, if you are a current Technician or Technician Plus, you would automatically obtain General class privileges with no additional testing. The current General examination would remain unchanged for new applicants.

The third license class, the Extra, would involve the fewest changes. Under the League proposal, hams with Advanced class licenses would essentially automatically become Extra class because of similarities in the technical proficiency required for both levels. New applicants for the Extra class license would have to pass a 5 word-per-minute code test--the written test would stay as is. If you're currently a Novice, Tech Plus or General license holder, you would receive a lifetime 5 word-per-minute credit.

The proposed changes got the blessing of ARRL's Board of Directors January 16th. The proposals are the creation of a League Executive Committee acting at the Board's direction. The new structure suggestions come as a result to changes in international radio regulations that are part of the World Radiocommunication Conference 2003. At the same time, the FCC has been wanting to streamline the amateur radio licensing structure which it began more than five years ago.

How do radio amateurs feel about the changes? Reaction is mixed:

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Janice Rock AF4LT - Audio Only Report: Please listen to audio version of newscast.
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Janice Rock, AF4LT, sees benefits and drawbacks:

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Janice Rock AF4LT - Audio Only Report: Please listen to audio version of newscast.
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Supporters say the new structure offers a true entry level license with HF privileges that should boost growth in the amateur radio service. While some hams may claim that taking away code for HF access damages amateur radio, other hams dispute that. Bill Levey, WA4FAT:

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Bill Levey, WA4FAT - Audio Only Report: Please listen to audio version of newscast.
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Supporters say the changes will help amateur radio by allowing new Novices to

participate in emergency nets on HF sideband. The impact of this proposal on amateur radio's long term future has Janice Rock concerned for another reason:

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Janice Rock AF4LT - Audio Only Report: Please listen to audio version of newscast.
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League Executive Vice President David Sumner K1ZZ says the Novice class license could wind up getting a new name, more appropriate for the times -- this, as amateur radio faces what could be one of the biggest changes in its history.

>From Birmingham, Alabama, I’m David Black, KB4KCH for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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More is in cyberspace at the League’s website. You will find it at www.arrl.org (ARRL, ARNewsline(tm))

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RESCUE RADIO: NYC ARES ACTIVATES FOR COLD WEATHER

The New York City District Amateur Radio Emergency Service was called into action last Wednesday evening, January 14 th. This, after the American Red Cross of Greater New York contacted Mike Lisenco N2YBB. Lisenco is the District Emergency Coordinator for ARES and the message was clear: Call together the members of ARES to provide emergency communications between the warming centers being established in the five boroughs and Red Cross headquarters in Manhattan.

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Lisenco: “Once I received the phone call from the coordinator of disaster volunteers at the Red Cross of greater New York, the first thing that I did was to call the five EC’s we have here in New York City. Each borough which constitutes a county has its own EC. In turn they called their people looking staff the shelters.”

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By the next morning, New York City District ARES Emergency Coordinators had more than a dozen Amateur Radio operators on standby awaiting the activation. Friday evening they went into action after Mayor Bloomberg announced the shelter openings. The ARES radio operators manned their posts throughout the operation, which lasted the better part of a day during some of the most frigid weather ever recorded in the Big Apple. The hams finally stood down on Saturday afternoon.

This is not the first time that New York City District ARES has provided critical communications for emergencies. They were active with the oil barge explosion at Port Mobile on Staten Island, the Northeast Blackout in August 2003 and did heroic work following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.
 (ARNewsline(tm), NYC ARES)

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Break 1

Stay tuned for the details on one of amateur radios most ambitious mentoring projects. It's coming up later in the newscast, but first From the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the Peace River Repeater Associations systems serving Punta Gorda Florida.

(5 sec pause here)

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ANNOUNCING THE ROY NEAL, K6DUE, AMATEUR RADIO MENTORING PROJECT

Amateur Radio Newsline is paying tribute its late vice president, Roy Neal, K6DUE, by naming an ongoing mentoring program in his honor. Roy became a silent key last August after surgery. He was 82.

The Roy Neal, K6DUE, Amateur Radio Mentoring Project is designed to pair new hams -- often called "newbies" -- with veteran amateurs. This, in the hope that some of the established hams' operator skills can be passed down to new generations.

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Pasternak: "ere is a long tradition of mentoring, often called "elmering," in Amateur Radio. No one knows the origin of the term, but the first teacher might well have been named "Elmer." My mentor was a guy named Charlie Zussman. Back in the 1950's he was WA2AKX. Today he's WE2R. And his helping me become a ham has lead to a friendship that has lasted a lifetime. What he taught me was that tradition is an important part of the hobby.

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That's Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, who has produced these newscasts since 1977. He and the Newsline Board of Directors came up with the idea for this project. Bill says that ham radio has become a tremendously complex arena and new hams often don't know where to turn for help:

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Pasternak: "We have licensed hams who are truly experts in numerous fields ranging from bouncing radio signals off the moon, to writing complicated software which enables new forms of two-way communication. We want to take advantage of that knowledge base to help newcommers."

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While Amateur Radio includes world-class experts in a number of specialties, there are literally thousands of hams who have operating skills also worthy of

passing on. For example, contesting is very popular, yet it is a tough nut to crack for a beginner.

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Pasternak: “Contesting is intimidating. I know. I’m just getting started. Good contest operators often are able to contact four stations per minute for hours at a time. The great ones do even better than that. How they are able to do that is a skill that should be passed on to newcommers.”

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Two large pools of Amateurs are needed to make this mentoring project work. First, there must be a group of volunteers who have a skill and are willing to share their time. The second group is made up of the large number of beginners who want to learn.

One of the nations top mentors, kit building expert Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB, has agreed to help set up databases and to begin the process of matching mentors with beginners. All we need to know is if you need assistance or if you are able to mentor others. We also need your name, call letters, address with zipcode, phone number, e-mail and when its best call.

The special e-mail address to register is mentor@arnewsline.org.

Mentors might be matched by zipcode – and be in the same town, or they might be half-way around the world from each other and communicate by e-mail. Either way I think we can make it work.

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Pasternak: “The project’s namesake, Roy Neal, K6DUE, was himself a mentor and not only in ham radio. I know this first hand because he is the one who taught me to become a better writer and producer.

More important: Those of us who knew Roy, also know that helping others was a very important part of his life. As such. we feel that the least that we here at Amateur Radio Newsline can do is keep his memory alive with this project.”

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Again, that e-mail address to register for the Roy Neal, K6DUE, Amateur Radio Mentoring Project is mentor@arnewsline.org More information is on our website at www.arnewsline.org

And Roy, old buddy, this one is for you! (ARNewsline(tm), W6RCL)

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THE BPL FIGHT: NORTH CAROLINA HAMS MEET WITH POWER PROVIDERS

Slow but steady progress in dealing with the imminent release of Broadband over Poweerlines in North Carolina. Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, is here with more:

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Progress Energy fulfilled their promise to North Carolina Amateur Radio operators and invited several Raleigh area hams to observe their new Phase II BPL trial in a rural subdivision south of the city on January 15th.

BPL – Broadband over Power Lines – is a system for delivering high speed Internet through neighborhoods and into homes and businesses via the power lines. The technology places radio frequency signals on the power lines in parts of the spectrum between 2 and 80 MHz. Those signals radiate to some extent, and can cause interference to a receiver in the vicinity of the power lines. Naturally this has become cause for great concern among hams worldwide.

In Raleigh, three ham radio operators met with engineers for both Progress Energy and Amperion, the equipment manufacturer. Two of the Progress Energy engineers were also hams.

The BPL trial consisted of a half-mile of overhead feeder along a highway, and a few dozen homes passed by buried power lines. A “repeater” amplified the signal about every other block.

We were particularly interested in the spectrum used. We learned that each run of BPL, from repeater to repeater, uses two blocks of spectrum, 2.5 and 3.5 MHz wide. At each repeater, a different block of spectrum is required.

The overhead feeder segment in this trial used spectrum blocks around 25 and 29 MHz. We listened with mobile equipment driving on the road adjacent to the power line, and received S-9 signals in the immediate vicinity of the line that sounded like this when tuning across the 10 meter band:

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[audio clip of BPL signal]
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The signal fell off quickly when driving away from the line, but a ham at a home station almost a mile away heard the 10-meter BPL signal about S-6 using an 80-meter dipole antenna.

Amperion says a Network Operation Center can move any repeater to another block of spectrum, or notch part of a block by remote control, to eliminate interference, but they were unable to demonstrate that for our test.

Even with that flexibility, fitting 3.5 MHz wide blocks of energy in between ham bands would be a delicate jigsaw puzzle. That much “empty” spectrum exists only between the 30, 20 and 17-meter bands, and it’s empty only from the perspective of Amateur Radio.

Skip could completely upset the equation. BPL signals, which are similar to very low power QRP Amateur signals, could reflect off the ionosphere and appear hundreds or thousands of miles away. The energy of one isolated trial area might not have much impact, but a mature nationwide system with hundreds or even thousands of installations using the same spectrum blocks could be a very different story.

Yet to come in BPL is a comprehensive report from the NTIA; an FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for changes in Part 15, based on last year’s Notice of Inquiry; and a decision by your local utility about getting involved in BPL.

Reporting for Newsline, this is Gary Pearce KN4AQ in Raleigh, North Carolina

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The hams at the test included Wake County ARES E-C Tom Brown, N4TAB, Technical Specialist Frank Lynch, W4FAL, and reporter Gary Pearce, KN4AQ. (ARNewsline(tm))

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: K1IGD NAMED NEW QCWA GENERAL MANAGER

Chuck Walbridge, K1IGD is the new General Manager of the Quarter Century Wireless Association. Walbridge is already at work and has set up a new postal address. You now write to QCWA at PO Box 3247, Framingham, Massachusettes, 01705. He can be reached by e-mail to qcwagm@rcn.com (E-Mail)

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RADIO LAW: CA COMMERCIAL SITE OWNER LOSES A ROUND IN BATTLE OVER ANTENNA FARM

Commercial mobile radio service provider James A. Kay has been dealt a setback by a California state appellate panel. The court has upheld a superior court finding that the antenna farm Kay maintains at his Rancho Palos Verdes home is not exempt from city permit requirements.

Late word is that Kay is continuing his fight with the city. This, even though he obtained permits for two of his 20 antennas with the condition that he remove the others. More is on-line at http://www.dailybreeze.com/content/news/nmpntenna7.html (CGC)

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HAMFESTS AND CONVENTIONS: GAINSVILLE FL. IN APRIL

Looking ahead in the social calendar we find the Gainesville Hamfest slated for April 24th and 25th at the Leach County Fair Grounds near GAINSVILLE Florida. The event will feature fun, food, prizes, tailgate selling , camping, ham radio testing and lots more. For more information write to GARS, PO Box 140383, Gainesville, Florida 32614, or visit www.gars.net/hamfest on the world wide web. (E-Mail)

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HAMFESTS AND CONVENTIONS: THE AES SUPERFEST IN APRIL

Molly Schreiber of Amateur Electronic Supply says that now is the time to schedule your organization for a display at the 2004 AES Superfest.

Molly says that the new web pages are up and running. Just go to www.aesham.com, select MENU from the right-hand side bar and click SUPERFEST in the menu listing on the page that appears.

After that all; you need do is click on RADIO CLUB REGISTRATION. After registering your organization, you will receive a conformation E-mail with the

confirmation and itinerary.

Molly adds that the deadline for signing up is March 1st. Superfest 2004 is slated for April 2nd and 3rd at the A-E-S location at 5710 W. Good Hope Road in Milwaukee Wisconsin. (AES)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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HAMVENTION 2004: THE HAMVENTION "SHOPPING CART"

Hamvention 2004 says that it is now accepting VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover Cards for tickets, booth spaces and flea market spaces. This, using its brand new on-line "Shopping Cart."

Planners say that this is a simple and secure way to set up your personal Hamvention experience and assures that you can get what you want. And you can do it all without having to ever leave your home.

The Hamvention "Shopping Cart" is located in cyberspace at www.w8bi.org/hamvention/shop.html. When the page loads, click on the green box with the words: "Enter The Shopping Cart" and take a look at what's being offered over the world-wide-web.

This years Hamvention dates are May 14th, 15th and 16th. The venue is the HARA Arena in the Dayton suburb of Trotwood Ohio. (Hamvention)

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SYMPOSIUMS: CSVHFS IN JULY IN CANADA

The 38th annual Central States VHF Society Conference will be held July 22nd to the 25th and planners are already seeking presenters of technical talks that will also be published in the conference proceedings.

The deadline for submitting final papers will be May 1st. This years gathering will be held at the Delta Meadowvale Resort and Conference Centre in Mississauga Ontario, Canada not far from Toronto. More information on the event and the need for speakers is available from Bob Morton, VE3BFM. His e-mail is VE3BFM@csvhfs.org (CSVHFS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ECHO TEAM REPORTS PROGRESS

AMSAT North America reports that work on the Echo satellite is progressing

smoothly. According to the ham radio space agency, an integration and testing team lead by Jim White, WD0E, and Mike Kingery, KE4AZN, was 2003 at SpaceQuest in December. SpaceQuest is in Virginia and during the initial satellite integration session, about 90% of Echo's hardware was successfully tested. Also, most of the telemetry calibration was accomplished. Especially encourage is word that the new experimental L-band receiver and S-band transmitter functioned well during their first tests.

For more information on the progress of this new bird take your web browsder over top see www.amsat.org and take the "Echo Project Info" link. (AMSAT--NA)

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INTERNATIONAL - CANADA: NEW ONTARIO SM

Radio Amateurs of Canada reports that Robert McKenzie, VE3SJQ, has stepped down as Ontario Section Manager. His replacement is Rose Scholtyssek, VE3RIS. Scholtyssek’s E-mail is rose@igs.net (RAC)

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DX

In D-X, word that F6FXS will be active as FG/F6FXS from Guadeloupe through the 13th of February. He will operate on 40, 30, 20, 15 and 10 metres on CW only. Look for him between 13.00 and 14.00 and again from 22.00 to 24.00 UTC. Q-S-L as directed on the air.

And GB4BLC, standing for 'Bedworth Lions Club', is being operated by Brian, G8GMU, until the 29th of January to raise awareness of the work of Lions International. (Varios DX sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF K2ORS

And finally this week, a new book is in the works about a broadcast legend who also happened to be a ham radio operator. Take a listen:

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Shep: “Well there I am playing that character deep in the jungle. We have $400,000 of camera equipment that’s being eaten by mosquitoes. They eat Betamax cameras. You don’t know about the tropics. Leaches are coming up the tripods, when a runner comes down the beach. He’s a Chumaro Indian.

He’s running. He’s sweating. He arrives in the clearing. This is exactly what happened.

The Director is standing there. He’s sweating and saying: ‘...damn, we got to get this.’ We kept trying to clean the lens off. It was a tough shoot.

And this Chumaro runner comes up and he’s saying; ‘Message. Message.” He has a message. The Director looks at it and he hands it to me and the message said -- and I quote: ‘...The Dayton Hamvention called. They want you to speak this spring.’

I said: ‘For cripes sake, how did they know I was in the jungle’
(laughter)”

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That was the late Gene Shepherd, K2ORS, speaking at the Dayton Hamvention several years ago. Shep as he liked to be called, passed away in 1999. Now, author Eugene Bergmann has set to work writing the definitive book about the ham who invented talk radio. In a recent interview with Amateur Radio Newsline, he told us why:

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Bergmann: “Well I first started listening to Jean Shepherd way back in ‘56 when I was in college and I think what he had to say and the way he said it affected my thinking for the rest of my life. Soon after he died I realized how important he was to my way of thinking. That he was like an old friend. I got more and more involved in learning more about him and I finally decided that I had to write a book about his art.”

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In writing his book, Eugene Bergmann wants to make certain that every aspect of Shep’s life and career is accounted for, including his love of ham radio. And a love it was as in this very rare recording where he accurately predicted the explosive growth in F-M and repeaters in general and one New York City machine in particular:

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Shep: “I don’t think you guys who sit around every night like you do recognize the already legandary status of this repeater outside of this area. I just came back from a trip from the Canadian border and all the way down through New England and way up in the Northern part of Maine I worked guys and the one thing that they all talked about was SUR (WA2SUR). And they really was a quality of ‘wow’ in their voice. I think that in another ten years there’s no telling how immense this repeater will be and what a structure it will be. I am very serious when I say this. I think we are in the beginning of a thing here and I think that ultimately 25 years from now people will look back on the early two meter guys like us -- we’re considered early guys now -- with a legendary awe. You know, with a quality of awe, like ‘my god -- they started it all.”

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That was recorded way back the evening of June 21st 1972 over the then WA2SUR repeater in New York City. K2ORS was right on in his F-M and repeater growth forecast. Bergmann says that’s the kind of he plans to include:

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Bergmann: “In May of 1968 in one of his broadcasts he said: ‘...I became at the age of ten, totally, maniacally and for life I might point out -- completely skulled out by Amateur Radio.’ So he was quite an enthusiast up to his death in ‘99”

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Sound intriguing? Well you can find out a lot more about Eugnene Bergann’s book and how you can help to writer it on this weeks RAIN Report. Just go to www.rainreport.com or dial into area code 847-827-7246, sit back and enjoy a quarter hour with Eugene Bergmann and his new book on the legendary Jean Shepherd, K2ORS. (ARNewsline(tm))

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), PO Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

A reminder that the e-mail address to register to take part in the Eroy Neal, K6DUE Amateur Radio Mentoring Project is mentor@arnewsline.org

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I’m Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening." Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2003. All rights reserved.